MARKING AND IDENTIFICATION OF
PASSIVE FISHING GEAR AND
BEAM TRAWLS

GUIDANCE FOR INDUSTRY

ISSUED BY FISHERIES DEPARTMENTS OF THE UK
DECEMBER 2005
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beam Trawls</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive Gear</td>
<td>3 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Labels</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Buoys</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex A – United Kingdom’s Territorial Waters</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex B - Characteristics of Marker Buoys and Intermediary Marker Buoys</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex C – Fishery Office Contact Details</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

1. These instructions take effect from 1 January 2006.


3. These regulations apply to all relevant fishing gear deployed in Community waters outside territorial waters. A map showing UK territorial waters is at Annex A.

DEFINITIONS

4. The gears which must be marked in accordance with these rules are:
   - **beam trawls** which are defined as trawls which are towed from outrigger booms and;
   - **passive gear** which is defined as:
     - longlines;
     - gillnets;
     - entangling nets;
     - trammel nets and;
     - drifting gillnets which may consist of one or more separate nets which are rigged with top, bottom and connecting ropes, and may be equipped with anchoring, floating and navigational gear.

BEAM TRAWLS

5. Each assembled beam of a beam trawl carried on board or used for fishing must clearly display the external registration letters and numbers (PLN) of the vessel to which it belongs on the beam or shoes of each beam.

6. It will be an offence not to mark each beam with the PLN of the vessel.

PASSIVE GEAR

7. All passive gear carried on board or used for fishing must be clearly marked and identifiable in accordance with the guidance below.

   **Labels**

8. Each set of passive gear must display the PLN of the vessel they belong to on a label attached to the upper first row at both ends of each passive gear. For passive gear extending more than one nautical mile labels must be attached to the upper first row of the gear at regular intervals not exceeding one nautical mile.

9. The labels must be made of a durable material, securely fitted to the gear, at least 65 millimetres wide and at least 75 millimetres long.
10. The PLN displayed on each label must not be effaced, altered or allowed to become illegible.

**Buoys**

11. Two end marker buoys and, where necessary, intermediary marker buoys must be fixed to each passive gear used for fishing. A diagram showing the required characteristics of end and intermediary marker buoys is at Annex B. These are described in greater detail below.

12. Each marker buoy must display the PLN of the vessel which it belongs to as follows:
   - PLN shall be displayed as high above the water as possible to be clearly visible and;
   - in a contrasting colour to the colour on which they're displayed.

The PLN displayed on the marker buoy must not be effaced, altered or illegible.

13. The cords which link the buoys to the passive gear must be of a submersible material or weighted down. The cords linking the end marker buoys to each gear shall be fixed at the ends of the gear.

14. In addition to paragraphs 12 and 13 end marker buoys must display the following characteristics:
   - the mast must be at least 1.5m above sea level measured from the top of the float;
   - they must be coloured but not red or green;
   - They must have:
     - one or two rectangular flag(s) at least 40cm square, and at least 80cm above sea level; where two flags are required on the same buoy (see paragraph 15) the distance between them should be at least 20cm; flags indicating the extremities of the same net should be of the same size and colour (but not white)
     - one or two yellow lights which give one flash each five seconds long (F1 Y5s) and visible from a distance of at least two nautical miles;
     - a top sign consisting of a sphere of at least 25cm topped with one or two luminous bands which cannot be red or green and at least 6cm broad. A spherical radar reflector may be used as the mark on top of the buoy;
     - a radar reflector giving an echo of at least two nautical miles
     - a label complying with the requirements detailed in paragraphs 9 & 10

15. End marker buoys must be fixed to passive gear in the following way:
   a) the buoy in the western sector (meaning the half compass circle from south through west to and including north) shall be rigged with two flags, two striped luminous bands, two lights, a radar reflector and/or a top sign and a label;
b) the buoy in the eastern sector (meaning the half compass circle from north through east to and including the south) shall be rigged with one flag, one striped luminous band, one light, a radar reflector and/or a top sign and a label.

16. **Intermediary marker buoys** must be fixed to passive gear which extends more than five nautical miles. They must be deployed at distances of not more than 5 nautical miles so that no part of the gear extending more than 5 nautical miles shall be unmarked.

17. Intermediary buoys should have the same characteristics as those of end marker buoys in the eastern sector (paragraph 15b) except the flags must be white.

18. If you have any questions regarding this guidance please contact your local fishery office. Fishery office details are provided at Annex C.

Annex A – United Kingdom’s Territorial Waters
Annex B - Characteristics of Marker Buoys and Intermediary Marker Buoys
# Annex C – Fishery Office Contact Details

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